REMARKS

We have carefully considered the Office Action dated April 22, 2004, in which claims 1-6, 12 and 13 are allowed and claims 7-11 are rejected under 35 USC §101 and §112. We have amended independent method claims 7 and 9 to more particularly point out that the redundancy symbols produced by the steps of the respective methods are the ECC symbols for detecting and correcting errors in the k data symbols, which are manipulated to form the redundancy symbols. As the amendment points out, the redundancy symbols are not merely another set of numbers, and the claims as amended should overcome the rejection under 35 USC §101. We have also amended claims 7 and 9 to remove the offending "and/or" language, and the claims as amended should overcome the rejection under 35 USC §112.

We have added new claims 14 and 15 to point out that the redundancy symbols produced by the method steps of claims 7 and 9 may be concatenated with the k data symbols to produce data code words. Further, we have added new claims 16-20 to point out that the redundancy symbols produced by the method steps of claims 7 and 9 may be used to correct errors in the k data symbols.

We agree with the Examiner that the cited references do not teach or suggest the current invention.

We respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections of claims 7-11 in light of the above and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

Please charge any fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account

No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

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